



Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

## Department of Environmental Protection

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# MassCleanDiesel: Frequently Asked Questions

Note: The MassCleanDiesel program ended on June 30, 2011. The following information was previously distributed to bus owners, vendors, and other interested parties. Although the program has ended and funding for retrofits is no longer available, this information is still available on this website for anyone who wants to learn about the MassCleanDiesel school bus retrofit program.

## What is MassCleanDiesel?

MassCleanDiesel is the nation's first statewide program to reduce air pollution from diesel-powered school buses. MassCleanDiesel will equip all eligible diesel-powered school buses in the Commonwealth with diesel retrofits, at no expense to bus owners. By reducing pollution from diesel-powered buses, MassCleanDiesel will help provide cleaner rides to school for kids and healthier air for everyone.

## What are the benefits of retrofitting diesel-powered school buses?

While taking the bus to school is by far the safest choice for hundreds of thousands of children every year, school buses, like all diesel-powered vehicles, pollute the air with harmful gases and particles. Installing diesel retrofits on school buses can decrease the amount of harmful pollution generated, helping to reduce the risk of asthma attacks, respiratory problems, and other diseases. This is especially important for children, whose developing lungs are particularly susceptible to diesel exhaust's damaging health effects.

## What does it mean to retrofit a school bus?

A diesel retrofit is essentially a two-step process in which a bus is fitted with additional equipment so it will run cleaner. The bus receives (1) one of three available enhanced exhaust filtering technologies to reduce tailpipe pollution and (2) an enhanced crankcase ventilation (CCV) filter to prevent toxic engine fumes from entering the passenger cabin. These retrofits take only a few hours to install, but reduce pollution

This information is available in alternate format. Call Michelle Waters-Ekanem, Diversity Director, at 617-292-5751. TDD# 1-866-539-7622 or 1-617-574-6868  
MassDEP Website: [www.mass.gov/dep](http://www.mass.gov/dep)

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for many years. The three most widely used tailpipe technologies are diesel oxidation catalyst (DOC), flow-through-filter (FTF), and diesel particulate filter (DPF). Of these, DOCs are more affordable but less effective than DPFs, which provide the greatest reductions but also carry the highest cost. FTFs fall between DOCs and DPFs in terms of expense and effectiveness. For a detailed technical description of these technologies, visit the web sites of the Manufacturers of Emission Controls Association and the Diesel Technology Forum.

### **Are diesel retrofits proven to be effective?**

Yes. MassCleanDiesel will only pay for installations of retrofits that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or the California Air Resources Board has verified for achieving effective pollution control. Every technology used in this program helps prevent the most harmful exhaust particles from entering the air. Further, these technologies are safe and proven and do not compromise vehicle performance or raise difficult engine maintenance issues. More than 500,000 vehicles worldwide have already received similar retrofits.

### **How do bus owners participate in the program?**

To receive diesel retrofits, bus owners will need to enroll in MassCleanDiesel, provide general information about their school buses, obtain estimates from retrofit vendors, and then arrange for retrofit installations. MassDEP will reimburse retrofit vendors for these installations, provided they meet all terms of the program. MassDEP is developing online application forms and instructional materials to streamline this process and minimize the effort required to receive retrofits.

### **Is participation in the program mandatory?**

No. MassCleanDiesel is a voluntary program, and retrofitting school buses is currently optional. However, after the program ends (currently planned for 2010), school bus owners may be required to install diesel retrofits on certain buses and will likely have to pay for their own diesel retrofits, at a cost of several thousand dollars per vehicle.

### **When is the program scheduled to begin and end?**

The program has officially launched, and funds are expected to be available through 2010.

### **How can I get more information about MassCleanDiesel?**

MassDEP will post important announcements, press releases, and other informational materials on this Web site throughout the program. To get answers to specific questions, call the program Help Line (617-292-5809) or e-mail [MassClean.Diesel@state.ma.us](mailto:MassClean.Diesel@state.ma.us).